

# Kuurn Kopan Noot language

**Kuurn Kopan Noot**, or the **Warrnambool language**, is an extinct Aboriginal Australian language of Victoria (Australia). It had a number of dialects, including Kuurn Kopan Noot proper. Some of these were **Dhauwurd wurrung**, **Gunditjmara**, **Bigwurrung**, **Gai Wurrung**, **Giraiwurrung**, **Keerray Woorroong**, **Wirngilgnad dhalinanong**, **Wulluwurrung** (with variant spellings of each). The dialects were spoken by the Gunditjmara, Girai wurrung, Girai wurrung and Djargurd Wurrung peoples.

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## Phonology

A likely phonemic inventory for the Warrnambool language is shown below.

	Consonants					
	Labial	Dental	Alveolar	Retroflex	Palatal	Velar
Stop	p	t̪	t	ɽ	c	k
Nasal	m	n̪	n	ɽ̥	ɲ	ŋ
Lateral		ɭ	l	ɭ̥	ʎ	
Rhotic			r~r̥	ɽ̥		
Approximant					j	w

Rhotic consonants were not distinguished in older sources. It is unclear to determine whether the retroflex consonant was a glide or a flap. Both were written as **r**.

Although most Australian Aboriginal languages use three vowels /a/, /i/, and /u/, the amount of vowels are not clearly distinguished within the other sources for the Warrnambool language. There is some fluctuation between /i/ and /e/, and /u/ and /o/. Where there was a back vowel occurring before a syllable-final palatal, /o/ was used instead of /u/, to give a better idea of the more likely pronunciation (i.e. *puroyn* "night").<sup>[4]</sup>

Kuurn Kopan Noot	
	Dhauwurd Wurrung
	<i>Gurnditjmara</i>
Native to	Australia
Region	Victoria
Ethnicity	Gurnditjmara (Dhauwurd wurrung), Djargurd Wurrung, Girai wurrung, ? Gadubanud
Extinct	(date missing)
Language family	<div>Pama–Nyungan<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Kulinic<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Kuurn Kopan Noot</b></li></ul></li></ul></div>
Dialects	Kuurn-Kopan-Noot Peek-Whurrung (Bi:gwurrung) Koort-Kirrup Dhautgart/Keerray (wurru) Gaiwurrung Tjarcote (Djargurd Wurrung, Warrnambool) <sup>[1]</sup>
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	Either: <div>gjm – Gunditjmara</div> <div>wkr – Keerray-Woorroong</div>
Glottolog	warr1257 ( <span>http://glottolog.org/resource/language/id/warr1257</span> ) <sup>[2]</sup>
AIATSIS <sup>[3]</sup>	S20 ( <span>https://collection.aiatsis.gov.au/austlang/language/S20</span> ) Dh Wurrung, S25 ( <span>https://collection.aiatsis.gov.au/austlang/language/S25</span> ) Keerray-Woorroong

# Dialects

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Dialects or alternative names included Kuurn-Kopan-Noot, Peek-Whurrung (Bi:gwurrung), Koort-Kirrup, Dhautgart/Keerray (wurru), Gaiwurrung, and Tjarcote (Djargurd Wurrung, Warrnambool).<sup>[1]</sup>

## Significant words

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### Ngamadjidj

The term *ngamadjidj* was used to denote white people by the Gunditjmara,<sup>[5][6]</sup> with the same word used in the Wergaia dialect of the Wemba Wemba language. The word is also used to refer to ghosts, as people with pale skins were thought to be the spirits of ancestors. The first known use is to refer to William Buckley, an escaped convict who lived with the Wathaurong people near Geelong from 1803 until 1865.<sup>[7]</sup>

The term was also applied to John Green, manager at Coranderrk, an Aboriginal reserve north-east of Melbourne between 1863 and 1924. It was also recorded as being used to describe other missionaries such as William Watson in Wellington, New South Wales, by the local Wiradjuri people. The term was a compliment, as it meant that the local people thought that they had been an Aboriginal person once - based largely on the fact that they could speak the local language.<sup>[8]</sup>

Ngamadjidj is also the name given to a rock art site in a shelter in the Grampians National Park, sometimes translated as the "Cave of Ghosts".<sup>[9]</sup>

## In popular culture

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Australian composer and soprano, Deborah Cheetham, wrote Australia's first requiem based on the frontier wars between Aboriginal Australian people in South Western Victoria and settlers which is sung entirely in the Gunditjmara language.<sup>[10]</sup> The first performance of the requiem, "Eumeralla, a war requiem for peace"<sup>[10]</sup> on 15 June 2019 in Melbourne featured Cheetham with the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, the MSO Chorus and the Dhungala Children's Choir.<sup>[10]</sup>

## References

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3. S20 (<https://collection.aiatsis.gov.au/austlang/language/S20>) Dhauwurd Wurrung at the Australian Indigenous Languages Database, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (see the info box for additional links)
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## External links

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- [Bibliography of Gunditjmara people and language resources \(http://aiatsis.gov.au/sites/default/files/docs/collections/language\\_bibs/gunditjmara\\_gurndidy\\_dhaurwurd\\_wurrung.pdf\)](http://aiatsis.gov.au/sites/default/files/docs/collections/language_bibs/gunditjmara_gurndidy_dhaurwurd_wurrung.pdf), at the [Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies](#)
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